covering unpaid wages, sacrifices, if any, to be made by the workers and any future conditionalities at least for a period of three years with a view to start the factory with their co-operation.

Budgetary Allocation for Food and Sugar Subsidy

1292. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of budgetary allocation for food and sugar subsidies during the current year;

(b) whether it is a fact that the allocation proved to be inadequate particularly due to increased carrying cost of foodgrains; and

(c) if so, whether enhancement of the allocation for the next year is being contemplated by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The budgetary allocation for food and sugar subsidies in the year 1999-2000 are as under:-

(Rs. in Crores)

	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates
Food	8200	9200
Sugar	360	235

(b) The increase in the allocation of food subsidy is mainly due to settlement of pending claims for previous years of the Food Corporation of India.

(c) No, Sir.

Acceptance of Rs. 500 Currency Notes

1293. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a panic like situation has been created in the public mind due to refusal by many shops/business establishments to accept Rs. 500/- currency notes; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) A few instances of some shops/business establishments refusing to accept 500 rupee notes have been brought to the notice of Reserve Bank of India.

(b) Reserve Bank of India has already clarified through the print and electronic media that all the 500 rupee notes issued by it continue to be legal tender and should, therefore, be accepted for all transactions. Public Sector Banks have also been asked to instruct all their branches to continue to freely accept 500 rupees notes for all transactions.

Appointment of CEOs in Banks

1294. SHRI GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the Ministry of Finance sitting tight on appointments of bank CEO;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a section of the banking community fears that without many senior bankers around to fill in the posts, powerful corporates may end up playing a major role in influencing the Ministry's pick and choose game; and

(c) what are the priorities of Government in CEO appointments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) At present the post of Chairman and Managing Director is vacant in Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda, UCO Bank, Dena Bank and Punjab National Bank. Action has already been initiated to fill up these vacancies, in accordance with the provisions of the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970/1980 and the proccedure prescribed for such appointments.

Avoidance of Custom Duty by Changing Cargo

1295. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the import cargo is changed illegally to avoid payment of the custom duty resulting in huge losses and leakage of revenue;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to make it mandatory for shipping agencies, to use the best avaibale anti-theft device viz. tamper free locks; and

(c) if so, by when, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN ATHE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) No case of substitution of containerised